

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 HA-05 SS-15 AID-05 L-03 H-01
CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 TRSE-00 IO-13 SP-02 /067 W
-----018195 081725Z /73
R 081333Z SEP 78
FM AMEMBASSY HELSINKI
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3171

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE SECTION 1 OF 2 HELSINKI 2897

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: SHUM, FI
SUBJECT: 1978 REPORT ON HUMAN RIGHTS PRACTICES IN FINLAND

REF: (A) STATE 207310, (B) STATE 218958,

1. THIS MESSAGE SUBMITS BELOW THE EMBASSY'S PROPOSED TEXT OF THE 1978 REPORT ON HUMAN RIGHTS PRACTICES IN FINLAND. THE FIRST PARAGRAPH OF THE REPORT HAS BEEN AMENDED TO REFLECT THE INFORMATION CONTAINED IN THE HUMAN RIGHTS REPORT SUBMITTED BY FINLAND TO THE UN HUMAN RIGHTS COMMITTEE UNDER ARTICLE 40 OF THE INTERNATIONAL COVENANT ON CIVIL AND POLITICAL RIGHTS.

2. AFTER CAREFUL REVIEW OF LAST YEAR'S REPORT ON HUMAN RIGHTS PRACTICES IN FINLAND, THE EMBASSY HAS CONCLUDED THAT NO FURTHER MODIFICATIONS ARE REQUIRED IN THIS YEAR'S REPORT. FINLAND'S PERFORMANCE REMAINS EXEMPLARY IN THIS FIELD.

3. BEGIN TEXT. HUMAN RIGHTS REPORT: FINLAND
FINLAND SUPPORT BROAD INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS OBJECTIVES, PUBLICLY AND PRIVATELY. FINLAND IS A SIGNATORY OF THE UN CONVENTION ON REFUGEES, THE COVENANT ON ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND CULTURAL AFFAIRS, AND THE INTERNATIONAL
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COVENANT ON CIVIL AND POLITICAL RIGHTS. WITH RESPECT TO THE LATTER, THE UN HUMAN RIGHTS COMMITTEE HAS NOTED CERTAIN STRUCTURAL DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE FINNISH LEGAL SYSTEM AND THAT ENVISAGED BY THE COVENANT. IN SEVERAL INSTANCES RESERVATIONS BY FINLAND WERE MADE IN CONNECTION WITH ITS RATIFICATION OF THE COVENANT. WHERE IT IS POSSIBLE THE FINNISH LEGIS-

LATION WILL BE BROUGHT INTO FULL CONFORMITY WITH THE COVENANT AND THE RESPECTIVE RESERVATION WILL THEN BE WITHDRAWN ACCORDINGLY.

(1) RESPECT FOR THE INTEGRITY OF THE PERSON, INCLUDING FREEDOM FROM:

A. TORTURE.

FREEDOM FROM TORTURE IS GUARANTEED BY LAW AND RESPECTED IN PRACTICE.

B. CRUEL, INHUMAN OR DEGRADING TREATMENT OR PUNISHMENT.

FREEDOM FROM CRUEL, INHUMAN OR DEGRADING TREATMENT OR PUNISHMENT IS GUARANTEED BY LAW AND RESPECTED IN PRACTICE.

C. ARBITRARY ARREST OR IMPRISONMENT.

FREEDOM FROM ARBITRARY ARREST OR IMPRISONMENT IS GUARANTEED BY LAW AND RESPECTED IN PRACTICE.

D. DENIAL OF FAIR PUBLIC TRIAL.

FINNISH LAW ALSO ALLOWS THAT PERSONS ACCUSED OF CERTAIN CRIMES, SUCH AS ESPIONAGE, MAY BE TRIED IN SECRET. THIS IS RARELY EMPLOYED, AND WHEN IT IS, ALL BASIC RIGHTS ENJOYED IN OPEN TRIALS ARE SCRUPULOUSLY OBSERVED.

E. INVASION OF THE HOME.

FREEDOM FROM INVASION OF THE HOME IS GUARANTEED LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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BY LAW AND RESPECTED IN PRACTICE.

(2) GOVERNMENTAL POLICIES RELATING TO THE FULFILLMENT OF SUCH VITAL NEEDS AS FOOD, SHELTER, HEALTH CARE AND EDUCATION.

IN THE FIELD OF SOCIAL JUSTICE, FINLAND'S RECORD IS ON A PAR WITH OTHER NORDIC STATES AND AMONG THE BEST IN THE WORLD. THE GOVERNMENT IS COMMITTED TO ECONOMIC POLICIES AIMED AT MAXIMIZING EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES AND TO THE FAIREST POSSIBLE DISTRIBUTION OF INCOME.

(3) RESPECT FOR CIVIL AND POLITICAL LIBERTIES, INCLUDING:

A. FREEDOM OF THOUGHT, SPEECH, PRESS, RELIGION AND ASSEMBLY.

THESE FREEDOMS ARE IN EFFECT.

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B. FREEDOM OF MOVEMENT WITHIN THE COUNTRY,
FOREIGN TRAVEL AND EMIGRATION.
THERE IS FULL FREEDOM OF MOVEMENT, FOREIGN TRAVEL
AND EMIGRATION.

C. FREEDOM TO PARTICIPATE IN THE POLITICAL
PROCESS.

ALL OTHER CIVIL AND POLITICAL LIBERTIES ARE
RESPECTED AND PROTECTED UNDER FINNISH LAW. BASIC
HUMAN RIGHTS ARE GUARANTEED IN CHAPTER II OF
THE FINNISH CONSTITUTION OF 1919. LABOR IS FREE
TO ORGANIZE, AND THE LABOR MOVEMENT IS WELL
DEVELOPED AND POLITICALLY INFLUENTIAL.
THERE ARE FINNISH STATUTES WHICH, ON THEIR FACE,
ARE NOT WHOLLY CONSISTENT WITH FINLAND'S GENERAL
POSITION OF STRONG COMMITMENT TO HUMAN RIGHTS.
FOR EXAMPLE, A 1948 STATUTE PROVIDES A
MAXIMUM OF TWO YEARS' IMPRISONMENT FOR PERSONS
WHO INTENTIONALLY AND PUBLICLY DEFAME A FOREIGN
STATE, AND THEREBY JEOPARDIZE FINLAND'S RELATIONS
WITH THAT STATE. THIS LAW, HOWEVER, HAS NEVER
BEEN USED.

(4) GOVERNMENT ATTITUDE AND RECORD REGARDING INTER-
NATIONAL AND NON-GOVERNMENTAL INVESTIGATION OF
ALLEGED VIOLATIONS OF HUMAN RIGHTS.

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THE FINNISH GOVERNMENT IS OPEN TO ANY OUTSIDE
INVESTIGATION OF POSSIBLE HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS,
ALTHOUGH THIS HAS NOT BEEN, AND IS UNLIKELY TO BE
NECESSARY GIVEN FINLAND'S EXEMPLARY PERFORMANCE IN
THE FIELD. FOR TEN YEARS THERE HAS BEEN A FINNISH

CHAPTER OF AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL, WHICH NOW HAS
SOME 500 MEMBERS. END TEXT.

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